

MINUTES  
**CALIFORNIA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL**

March 28, 1996  
Monterey Marriott Hotel  
Monterey, California

**Council Members Present**

- Douglas Wheeler, Resources Agency
- Richard Rominger, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Richard Wilson, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- Laurence Laurent, South Central Coast Regional Association of County Supervisors
- Michael Fischer, California Coastal Commission
- Dale Hoffman-Floerke, Department of Water Resources
- Ed Hastey, Bureau of Land Management
- Colonel Lyn Creswell, Department of the Navy
- Bill Maze, San Joaquin Valley Regional Supervisors Association of County Supervisors
- Elin Miller, Department of Conservation
- Hershel Read, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Nancy Huffman, Northern California Counties Supervisors Association
- Terry Jackson, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, NOAA
- Tami Grove, California Coastal Commission
- Jay Goldsmith, National Park Service
- Michael Mantell, Resources Agency
- Hilda Diaz-Soltero, National Marine Sanctuary, NOAA
- Chauncey Poston, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
- Nita Vail, Department of Food and Agriculture

- Robert Meacher, Regional Council of Rural County Supervisors
- Alisa Greene, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Frank Michny, Bureau of Reclamation
- Bob Haussler, California Energy Commission
- Anne Kinsinger, National Biological Service
- Chris Dewees, University of California
- Jacqueline Schafer, Department of Fish and Game
- G. Lynn Sprague, U.S. Forest Service
- Jerry Harmon, San Diego Association of Governments
- Ken Jones, Department of Parks and Recreation
- William Morrison, State Lands Commission

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Michael Mantell called the meeting to order, and introduced Richard Rominger, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Rominger addressed the Council with comments regarding the new Farm Bill. He emphasized flexibility and common sense as watchwords of the new bill which fulfills President Clinton's plan to make government work better, particularly in partnership with others. The Farm Bill commits to resource protection at a time when the world is seeing market conditions threatening to undo some of the past conservation gains that have been made.

Mr. Rominger alerted the Council to challenges facing everyone, both in terms of short-term and long-term demands on the environment that are imposed by the world's increasing food needs. He pledged the USDA's continued responsiveness. In reply to questions from the audience, the Deputy Secretary explained to the Council the program's purpose to provide money for states and other local governments that have programs already in place. He confirmed that California does qualify under the new legislation, and he thanked the governor for his support.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE DECEMBER 7, 1995 MEETING**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

## **REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

John Amodio, Chairman of the Executive Committee, reported on the status of the strategic plan activities. Staff is currently working with regional managers from the Desert and Sierra Nevada regions to conduct two regional managers forums this year. A tentative list of Biodiversity Issues Forums topics has been developed. Staff Orientation Workshops (also known as Creekside Chats when conducted for BLM field staff) is a new project and is dependent on recruiting staff and resources from other CBC members. Bioregional homepages are being developed in collaboration with CERES and the Education and Outreach Work Group. We are currently in the process of making all Biodiversity News issues available on line. The new operating budget for 96/97 will be discussed at the upcoming Executive Committee meeting. We expect to bill members in May. The Science Coordinating Committee's first task is to promote cooperative data development and distribution.

## **COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Seventh American Forest Congress (USFS)**

Jon Kennedy, U.S. Forest Service, summarized the results of the Seventh American Forest Congress. Ninety percent of the participants agreed that in the future our forests will be held in a variety of public, private, tribal, land grant, and trust ownerships by owners whose rights, objectives, and expectations are respected and who understand and accept their responsibilities as stewards. There was agreement by 910 that cohesive and stable policies, programs, and incentives should be available to allow forest owners and managers to sustain and enhance forests. Nine hundred sixty agreed to ensure that open and continuous dialogue is maintained and encouraged among all parties interested in forests.

### **Fire Strategies Team (CDF)**

Richard Wilson, Director for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, announced the Fire Strategies Committee's effort to support community-based, interagency prefire projects this fire season. This group's focus is on sustainable, ecosystem-based approaches to managing California's fire environments.

Due to the team's efforts, prefire became a critical focus of CDF's Fire Plan, environmental groups worked to raise funds for fuels management, and the Shasta-Tehama bioregional group developed a fire safe brochure. The group has influenced involvement and coordination among agencies. One example is the Department of Fish and Game, water protection agencies, and others provided input on CDF's Fire Plan, and planning protocols for prefire, suppression and post-fire activities. An inventory of prefire projects across state was developed by the team. Six large projects were selected to showcase how interagency

coordination, community involvement, and ecosystem-based principles can successfully come together on the ground to protect the public and environment.

Mr. Wilson then announced the release of the 1996 Action Plan. The objectives of the plan are to provide media support for the selected projects, assist community groups in identifying funding sources and mechanisms, and continue to build on existing efforts. This year=s plan will require continued commitment by participating members and additional work with local agencies and groups to promote on-the-ground projects.

Mr. Wilson concluded by inviting interested Council members and the public to work with the team on this year=s Action Plan. There will be a full presentation of the Fire Strategies Team at the June CBC meeting in Nevada City.

### **Vernal Pool Issues (EPA)**

Alisa Greene, from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, announced an upcoming framework agreement regarding the protection of vernal pools and suggested this be a future topic for the Council\*s consideration. This framework, which was drafted by various federal and state agencies, is meant to help with coordination, cooperation, and consistency in the efforts to improve the competence of ecobased protection of vernal pools. It is not a new program, rather it is meant to integrate what agencies are already doing. The principles of this agreement are: sound science, creating partnerships with locals, and improving program effectiveness. A vernal pool

conference to be held in Sacramento in June was announced by Ms. Greene. She encouraged the public and the Council to attend and participate.

Secretary Wheeler recommended that the Council devote additional time to this topic at an upcoming Biodiversity Council meeting at a time when the agreement has been executed and is ready to be implemented.

### **National Watchable Wildlife Conference (DFG)**

Jacqueline Schafer, Department of Fish and Game, referred the Council\*s attention to their packets for information regarding the 1996 Watchable Wildlife Conference to be held at Huntington Beach, California, November 12-17. The fifth annual conference is supported and endorsed by signatories of a National Memorandum of Understanding between 13 state and federal agencies and conservation organizations. The conference brings together community and business leaders, conservation specialists, and tourism industry representatives from around the world to build alliances in support of watchable wildlife programs. Bob Garrison of the Natural Heritage Division for Department of Fish and Game is the conference chairman. Information regarding this conference is available on the Internet from DFG home page.

### **Noxious Weeds Committee (CDFA)**

Nita Vail, Department of Food and Agriculture, distributed copies of the finalized Memorandum of Understanding between state and federal agencies with regard to noxious weed control and prevention. She informed the Council that a core group had been formed to consider development of strategies to implement the MOU. Some of the actions being considered are inclusion of a full-time position at CDFA to manage a data base of activities at the state and federal level. This group will meet again May 13 to discuss the action plan.

Ms. Vail emphasized the importance of early prevention and control of noxious weeds as one of the most cost-effective means of addressing the problem. As budget constraints continue to increase, many agencies will need to work more in cooperation and coordination to achieve the goals set by this Agreement. These activities can be better coordinated with the approved data base.

### **Coastal Salmon Initiative (Resources Agency)**

In the interest of time, Secretary Wheeler announced that Mr. Amodio's announcement of the status of the Coastal Salmon Initiative would be held at a later time.

### **Multi-species Planning Projects Tracking (BLM)**

Ed Hastey, Bureau of Land Management, announced the value and need for support of the California Watershed Project Inventory (CWPI). He demonstrated how multi-species, conservation planning efforts, and related watershed projects can more easily be tracked using this existing system. This interactive system would be an important step in showing the extent of activities throughout the state in furthering the goals of the MOU. This system is another example of ways of improving communication, similar to what has been accomplished through the Council's newsletter. This project may result in a slight increase in dues next year.

Secretary Wheeler expressed support for this project and reminded the Council members to continue to contribute information to update and maintain what is perhaps the most important data base of its kind in the country and which graphically depicts the variety of local and watershed activities occurring around the state, arrayed by bioregion.

### **Wood Waste Conversion Process Feasibility Study (RCRC)**

Robert Meacher, Regional Council of Rural County Supervisors, distributed a prospectus to the Council members concerning the wood waste conversion process feasibility study. The National Renewable Energy Laboratories in Denver, Colorado, have indicated funds are available from Amoco Oil for use in research and development of the production of ethanol out of wood waste. They

are considering locating manufacturing facilities in California. The Council will be presented with additional information at a later time.

Secretary Wheeler suggested the Executive Committee as a way of reaching the members of the Council with respect to this proposal.

### **Monterey Pine Pitch Canker Problem (DPR)**

Ken Jones, Department of Parks and Recreation, introduced the issue of pine pitch canker in this bioregion. Pine pitch canker is an exotic disease first discovered in California in 1988 in New Brighton State Beach. Thousands of ornamental pine trees have died from pitch canker and now native Monterey pine forests are threatened. The disease occurs in 15 coastal and adjacent inland counties from San Diego to Mendocino. The Pine Pitch Canker Task Force formed in December 1994 under the sponsorship of the California Forest Pest Council, and advisory group to the Board of Forestry. The task force is a coalition of private, governmental, and nonprofit groups dedicated to finding solutions to the pine pitch canker problem. The task force has identified priority research, management, and educational activities needed to combat the disease and is seeking funds to support these activities. The task force would like the opportunity to present their action plan to the Council at a future meeting. The

Department of Parks and Recreation requests that this item be included on a future Council agenda.

### **CREATING LINKAGES BETWEEN LAND USE AND THE HEALTH OF MONTEREY BAY**

Marc del Piero, former Monterey County Supervisor and member of State Water Resources Control Board, introduced the following three presentations:

#### **The California's Ocean Resources: An Agenda for the Future**

Brian Baird of the Resources Agency presented an overview of *California's Ocean Resources: An Agenda for the Future*, which was developed in support of the Ocean Resources Management Program. The program and Agenda have four goals: (1) assess, conserve, and manage California's ocean resources; (2) encourage environmentally sound economic development; and (3) advance ocean research, education, and technology development; and (4) maximize California's interests within State Tidelands, the Territorial Sea, and the Exclusive Economic Zone.

The Agenda describes the relationships between land and sea, the economic importance of ocean dependent industry, the use of ocean research, and the complex jurisdictional and ownership relationships in the ocean. The Agenda makes specific findings and recommendations regarding 11 different ocean

management issues such as habitat protection, water quality enhancement, erosion reduction, oil and gas activities, shipping safety, and research needs.

The Agenda finds that there is substantial duplication and confusion regarding some aspects of ocean management and recommends initiation of a state cabinet-level ocean resources management coordinating council. Secretary Wheeler is the honorary chair of an upcoming international conference in March 1997 intended to explore the findings and recommendations of the Agenda. The conference title is, *California and the World Ocean, 97*. The Agenda has been presented at six public workshops along the coast. The ocean program provides a vision for a more effective and efficient approach to stewardship, economic development, research, and jurisdictional issues for California's precious ocean resources.

### **Water Quality Protection Program for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary**

Dr. Holly Price, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, discussed with the Council an interagency effort to protect water quality in the Sanctuary and its 11 major watersheds through addressing urban/agricultural runoff, boating activities, and point sources of pollution. Her presentation included a visual tour through some of the diverse habitat of the area.

Dr. Price's presentation included a review of the program's main goals, foremost of which is to enhance and protect physical, chemical and biological conditions in the area through partnerships between federal, state and local agencies and businesses, landowners and the public. She recognized a number of members of the Biodiversity Council as participants in this effort and expressed appreciation for their continued support.

Also included in the presentation was a review of the broad range of problems being addressed by this program and the methods by which these problems have been successfully met. This method included extensive research, monitoring, working with local groups, and a process of integrated coastal management. Additional issues addressed by the program include marine and boating activities, agricultural, increasing stewardship of the Sanctuary and its watersheds, and preventing problems before crisis situations arise.

### **Restoration Linkages at Fort Ord**

Steve Addington, Bureau of Land Management, reviewed ways in which the closure of Fort Ord Army Base presented an opportunity for collaboration among conservation and development interests. From the Fort Ord Community Task Force, a Habitat Management Plan was developed for addressing the multi-species issues at Fort Ord. This plan differs from most habitat protection plans in that the primary financial burden will be with the state and federal government, rather than the private and local sectors. Mr. Addington also reviewed the use of

the CRMP process as an implementation tool to share resources. The implementation agreement is currently being developed to assure that all endangered species issues will be addressed.

Mr. Addington thanked the Council for their desire to assist in this program and recommended the Council continue with its effort to create a corporate culture that fosters partnerships, promotes a team concept versus collaboration, and continues to be a catalyst for change.

## **PANEL DISCUSSION**

### **Louis Calcagno, Vice Chair, Monterey County Planning Commission**

Louis Calcagno is a dairyman who has participated in wetlands restoration/creation on his farm in the Elkhorn Slough area. He reviewed for the Council his involvement with agriculture and conservation, discussing the history of the Elkhorn Slough and its watershed, from the Coastal Act and efforts by Fish and Game under the direction of Bruce Elliott to the organization of the land trust. He expressed strong support for John Oliver's project to create and restore the wetlands in some of the corridors, as well as

expressing concern that the wetlands be maintained, especially in light of the growth in the Salinas area.

### **Richard Nutter, Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner**

Richard Nutter, as a member of the Sanctuary Advisory Council, reviewed with the Council his concern about how agriculture in the Salinas Valley affects the Bay. The agricultural community has a strong political voice throughout California and the nation and it is a strong supporter of the Sanctuary Advisory Council. Mr. Nutter expressed the strong need to develop relationships with all organizations that have programs which deal with agriculture, as well as present stewardships where educational opportunities are provided. The Council was reminded of the need to avoid regulatory efforts and seek to find answers using the educational approach.

### **Karin Strasser Kauffman, Chair, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council**

Karin Strasser Kauffman, Chair of the 24-member body of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, commended the Biodiversity Council for elevating the Council's visibility and for bringing the meeting to Monterey Bay. She reviewed for the Council the need to utilize the public, harness volunteers and find ways for the public to be actively helpful in participating in various programs. Using the example of the Sanctuary Advisory Council, she reviewed the need for a formal structure for volunteers.



Ms. Strasser Kauffman explained to the Council the Sanctuary's three advisory bodies which are called working committees. These working committees include research, education, and environmental groups. She also recognized various volunteer programs like the Save Our Choice organization, which established a sanctuary stewardship program, and the Center for Marine Conservation.

Ms. Strasser Kauffman reviewed with the Council the need to develop alternative funding sources for programs that will supplement the governmental budgets. The Sanctuary Council is attempting to establish a private foundation to raise money for its programs and has available a Sanctuary license plate program for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary.

### **Bill Reichmuth, Public Works Director and Chair of Monterey Bay Regional Stormwater Task Force, City of Monterey**

Bill Reichmuth, Public Works Director and Chair of the Monterey Bay Regional Stormwater Task Force for the City of Monterey, reviewed the coordination success and potential for water quality and point source pollution programs for which he is involved. He presented to the Council the need for the concept of good science, the concept of source control versus in-pipe treatments, financing (permanent versus action dollars), and public awareness which extends to public action.

Mr. Reichmuth thanked Mr. del Piero and the State Water Resources Control Board for funding a model stormwater program task force, the purpose of which is to simply present water quality issues in all facets of local government, whether it is development standards or whatever.

### **A MANUAL OF CALIFORNIA'S VEGETATION**

Dr. Michael Barbour, founding and former Chair, Plant Communities Committee, California Native Plant Society, reviewed the book *A Manual of California's Vegetation*. He commended the members of the Council for their staffs' participation in the preparation of this publication. This book's standard names and descriptions now allow all the various resource agencies to speak the same language, improves the scale at which biological diversity is reviewed and monitored, affords the opportunity to review a scale of diversity which is not available when reviewed on an individual species level, and provides consistent, realistic targets for mitigation and restoration activities.

Dr. Barbour called the Council's attention to the efforts of Peggy Fiedler and Bruce Pavlik to develop a center for restoration research. This would be very practical and would be open to private groups who are interested in restoring and maintaining, mitigating developments and don't yet have the information to help the restoration efforts. He strongly supported the need for a central repository or lead agency that would function as an archivist, analyst,

holder of new data, and suggested the Department of Fish and Game would be a very appropriate lead agency. He commended the leadership of the Department of Fish and Game for their efforts in the preparation of the book and its publication.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Steve Singer, representing the Santa Cruz Mountains Bioregional Council, addressed the Council in support of endangered species management and efforts in regard to consensus building, especially as it relates to the coho salmon. He urged members to recognize the need to keep science first and foremost in the process, keeping the needs of the salmon at the forefront. He referred the Council's attention to Carl Sagan's book, *The Demon-Conscious World* and offered the Council his assistance in preventing a biodiversity crisis.

Additional public comments were made by Gary Paulsey, Monterey Bay Area Association of Environmental Professionals, and Eric Love, Pebble Beach Co.

### **SCHEDULE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next Council meeting will be held June 7, 1996 in Nevada City.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Note: Portions of the minutes were not captured due to media difficulties.